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A Fool on a Roof

Et in Arcadia Ego

AND OTHER POEMS

JEAN WRIGHT

BOSTON
RICHARD G. BADGER
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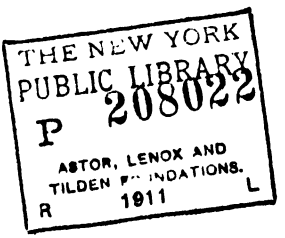

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To

All My Fellow Fools

But

Particularly To Those Who, By Force of Circumstance, Dwell in Philistia.

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A FOOL ON A ROOF

Et in Arcadia Ego

In a cave dug out of the side of a cliff,
  —The Agent calls it a flat;
He thinks he knows, so I pay my rent,
  And let it go at that—

I dwell in peace and fair content,
  Nor mind the lack of air;
For the Garden of the Gods is mine
  By climbing just one more stair.

My cave is snug and warm and cheap,
  And rich with the loot of years;
But the key of the Yale lock lets me out
  Too often, Margot fears.

But what can I do, when the house top calls
  With a voice that I must obey.
It's no use to try—let the work go hang—
  I'll do it another day!

* * * *

Up on the house top, under the sun,
  —Ah, but it's good to be here—
The wind off the river's a wee bit sharp,
  But I fancy the sad old year

Like some poor woman, young at heart,
  And use to being fair,
Forgets her age and thinks of spring;
  For spring is in the air.

Yet, the north wind is a stinging wind,
  And the fog looms mistily;
But the Palisades are friends of mine
  And stand heart-high to me.

And the old church tower, so close at hand,
  Holds a clanging and busy bell
That warns my heedless ears of the hours,
  —But it says that I waste 'em well.

* * * *

What's that? As I live it's a strolling band
  In the well they call a court;
And its blatant brass 'gainst the sheer brick walls,
  If one wanted to work, would thwart

One's best intentions—look—over there—
  That red thing swinging high!
Margot says it's a cheap old rug,
  But I know it's Tyrian dye.

That dancing clothes line, hung with things
  That belong to the cave it's above—
I held my breath when I saw it stretched,
  For Young Love helped Young Love.

* * * *

Listen—that man in the nearby flat—
  He fiddles his hours away—
I've never seen him—of course he's fat—
  But all that I have to say

Is, whenever he draws his loosened bow
  Across the taut *G* string,
It thrills me down to my very boots
  And the strings of my heart all wring.

Alack a day, what a day it is!
  But I must get to work;
For all my brains are held in pawn,
  And a pawn he mustn't shirk.

* * * *

The sullen clouds are hanging down
  Right over the town, and I think
That the sleet and snow have made my roof
  As slick as a skating rink.

And I am a fool to venture up
  Unless on business bent;
To hang the clothes, or latch the door,
  —And it's almost time for the rent.

But the fog on the river is thick, Margot,
  And the fog in my brain is as bad.
The sky and my heart are both like lead,
  And the old world seems so sad.

So—it's me for the house top—
  Hey old Wind—my, it's a bitter day—
But the sullen clouds are scudding fast,
  And the fog is blowing away.

I fancy my fiddler stayed in bed,
  Perhaps he sent for some beer.
Maybe he had it, and bread and cheese,
  —He'll starve some day, I fear.

Look—down the street, in his rough old coat
  Along comes my whistling man;
"Hello, here's a dime!" It'll go for a drink—
  But it's hey for the Pipes o' Pan!

* * * *

It's Sunday morning, and well-clad folk
  Are going to church over there;
Perhaps I'm a Pagan, up on my roof
  Breathing God's own fresh air.

But the choir boys are singing some wonderful thing
  That floats straight up to the sky;
It's a good old hymn, like the angels sing;
  And we listen, the angels and I.

Margot has donned her last year's gown,
  And let her old veil float,
To hide the rent that's under the chin,
  —But I have no Sunday coat.

She says it's a flimsy poor excuse,
  That I want to stay at home;
Well, Sunday mornings are good up here,
  And it's here that I generally come.

* * * *

My cave is snug and sweet—but sweet—
And the lamps are burning bright,
And Margot says I'll catch my death
If I go on the roof, to-night.

But I say that I want to see my star;
For something has gone wrong
In the way that I hitched my wagon on,
And I promise I wont stay long.

So—the Yale lock clicks, and I sneak up stairs
As quiet as can be.
I know I'm a fool, but what can I do
When the house top's calling me?

* * * *

Whew! but the wind is a bitter wind—
Old Wind, you don't play fair
To hit a man when he's off his guard,
And decidedly up in the air.

But I'm a king, on my own house top,
And the moon is all my own;
There's never a soul in sight to-night
And it's good to be alone.

Just a minute more—till the old bell clangs—
For my fiddler's mad to-night;
And my wagon runs on rubber tires
And it's hitched to my star all right.

Ah, it's good to be on the house top,
  Way up from the tired town,
But Margot's hair is gold in the light,
  And I think I'll be going down.

* * * *

We have a gorgeous bunch of flowers,
  —The flowers of yesterday—
They cost a beautiful great big dime,
  But Margot likes things gay.

And Margot's gown is old—but old—
  She says 'twas made from a scrap;
But it matches her eyes—her deep blue eyes—
  So I don't care a rap.

Neither does she, for the matter of that—
  It's as good as new, don't I see?
Then she laughs and sticks a rose in her hair,
  And the world looks good to me.

So—the house top calls, and it bids me come
  To the night and the biting air;
But my cave is warm and sweet—but sweet—
  And Margot calls me there.

THE SWITCHING-ENGINE

Oh, I'm just a switching-engine, in a grimy, smoky yard.
I do my work because I must—sometimes it's blooming hard
Just to push a load of empties up a thousand feet or so,
And then to pull 'em back again, and never let 'em go.

Oh, I'm rusty and I'm dirty, and they waste no time on me,
But they couldn't do without me—just let 'em try and see.
They may send that dandy flier half across the world and back:
But I guess they couldn't do it I didn't clear the track.

And when they're getting ready, he looks uncommon proud:
It seems to me he blows his steam unnecessary loud,
And flaunts his bally brasses, as much as if to say,
"Old chap—I'm really sorry—but I'm off again to-day."

Oh, he'll race across the country at sixty miles an hour!
Well, it's up to him to do it, for he's got the speed and power—
And I'm a poor old-timer, and I've got to stay behind
And rattle empties up and down as if I didn't mind.

I'm a rusty switching-engine, in a grimy, smoky
yard:
I do my work because I must—sometimes it's
blooming hard.
But, anyhow, I've got my pride; because, when
he comes back,
He'd not be such a dandy if I hadn't cleared the
track.

THE GAMBLERS

Fools—when the golden moments come,
And life is worth the living,
Why do we hold our empty hands
From what fate would be giving?

The greatest gamblers of the world
Staked glory, love, and power,
And won the world—or if they lost,
They gained one splendid hour.

THE DESERT

Mid-day

It is the mid hour of a glowing day. Off to the south
The Tres Hermanas thrusts three sheer bald peaks to meet
The burning sun. The sky blazes with vivid color overhead;
And straight across the endless, barren plain there comes
A strong west wind that blows great whirling clouds of dust;
And all the hurrying windmills clank and creak and groan.
Out in the sandy village street the bare head children play
At Bronco Busting by the boistrous hour. One panting boy
Down on all fours, with arching neck and lowered head, rears, bucks,
And jumps; a stalwart little man clinging a-top
With arms and thighs and heels. Wallowing in dust,
Screaming with joy, they clinch and roll and gasp.
Hark! Down the street a reckless rider comes,
Shouting a warning to the startled boys, who make
For nearest cover from the bronco's clattering heels,
And from the sheltering fence send boyish jeers.
The sunburned cowboy flings an answering laugh,
Whirls through the dust and out across the plain.

THE DESERT

Evening

Slowly the evening comes. Across the darkening plain
Far to the east, the Floridas, which bask all day
Beneath the burning sun, rear rugged threatening peaks
Against the waning light. A slow wind blows from out the gorge
In fitful gusts, hinting of coming night and chilly hours;
And over all, high in the west hangs one big star.
Against the opal sky a score of windmills swing their lazy arms:
From out some window sunk in rough adobe walls
A lamp gleams here and there: showing within
A table spread for evening's tranquil meal.
The tired children all indoors, no sound is heard
Save when some cow moves toward her milking place,
And stops for one sparce mouthful by the fence.
Down down the long sandy street a lonesome cowboy comes,
Jogs his lean horse, looks at the lights and hums an idle song.

THE DESERT

Night

Night in the desert. Nowhere else in all the world
Night comes like this. What do I say—there is no world
Save this. This pallid world of sand and sand and sand.
My eyes, my human eyes, can see no end,
Try as I may to pierce this ghastly vail.
Away in some dim region to the south
I know the brave rough mountains rear themselves,
But even they are hid behind the vail.
—My stark soul sickens at the dark that is not dark—
The hard bright moon seems far, so far away—
—The million, million stars that jeer at me—
Great God—how big it is—and I
But one more grain of sand beneath the immeasurable sky—
Night in the desert. All the bitterness
Or all the world lies in those words.

A SONG

I know a lad is fair an' tall,
  An' bonnie blue his 'ee,
Wi' just a glint o' light in 'em,
  Like sunlight on the sea.

An' when he is beside me
  I think him a' my own,
An' half I trust his vowin',
  That he loves but me alone!

But cruel doubts assail me
  When far apart are we,
An' naught can then avail me
  To prove his constancy.

For men and maids are fickle,
  An' vows are made to break;
An' lovers love each other
  For pretty love's sweet sake.

My lad is brave and tender,
  His like ye may not find;
But I know wi'out the tellin'
  That he's fickle as the wind.

The old love is the best love,
  —Until it flies away—
The new love is the true love,
  Forever—or a day!

THE UNQUIET HEART

We of the tribe of the unquiet heart,
We fight each day against the turns of chance;
The overwhelming tide of trivial things
That eat away the hours. The flying hours
That should be full of all life has to give.

We of the tribe of the unquiet heart—
We can not soothe the soul with gentle tasks:
We can not stitch away with tranquil hands
The little sorrows of the passing day—
We wear our souls out on the petty round.

We, of the tribe of the unquiet heart,
Who stay, because we must. Yet long for far off places;
For wind swept barren spaces:
For crowded towns and sweating mobs of men
Who toil by day and sleep through toil drugged nights.

We of the tribe of the unquiet heart.
We tread the stony path with tender feet,
A song upon our lips because we will.
—Yet—pity us not—ye who love the sweet small things—
Ye of the untroubled lives, ye of the quiet heart!

"TIS BETTER TO HAVE LOVED AND LOST"

'Tis better to have loved and lost,
  Than not have loved at all,"
Tho' sad the sight of true love cross't,
  'Tis better to have loved and lost,
Than on Life's sullen sea be toss't,
  Fettered and held in thrall.
'Tis better to have loved and lost,
  Than not have loved at all.

TO THE MOCKING BIRD

Cutting the silence at the sun's first ray,
A rapier thrust of sound comes, keen and clear.
—Oh soulless singer, thy glad roundelay
Falls cold and empty on my listening ear.

Poor pretty plagarist of all that's gay,
That throbbing song is meaningless to thee:
—And I—I like it not—it seems to say
Ye swing and sing in mockery of me.

Thou greet'st the coming of another day
In shrill bravado that can know no fear;
While my wild heart can never dare to say
Its thrilling song for all the world to hear.

THE LOCUST BLOOM

The locust bloom is heavy with the treasure of its sweetness,
The wonder of the west wind is like some magic wine—
The glory of the sunshine is made of gold and gladness—
The world is full of joy today—and all of it seems mine!

ONE NIGHT

One night, beneath a sky all velvet dark,
A soft wind blowing fresh against my face,
I went the road the day time knows full well,
But, dimly lighted, seemed another place.

My hand upon the engine's throbbing pulse,
That seemed to beat in unison with mine,
The things all wild and lovely that I love,
Came sailing to me on the sweet night wind.

And with me went a comrade like to me—
—Seldom upon the road comes such a one—
A spirit yet more daring and more free,
Who knows the velvet night and loves the sun.

I went the road the day time knows full well,
A soft wind blowing fresh against my face;
But ah, the night time hid the things I know,
—I went into illimitable space!

A SERENADE

Whisper it softly, oh ye sweet West winds,
  Whisper it softly in my sweetheart's ear,
Have care no prying breeze the secret finds,
  Have care no stranger shall my love-words hear.

Tell her the silver moonbeams love the earth;
  Tell her each flower adores a single star:
Tell her each clear-voiced bird can choose its mate,
  And answer to her love-note from afar.

But, Wind, when you are whispering in her ear
  This simple tale which never can grow old,
Do not forget to say my love for her
  Is greater than the boundless earth can hold.

Ah, gentle West wind up among the trees,
  Go beg my sweetheart for a token slight!
Go steal a kiss from off her dewy lips,
  And blow it to me for my own goodnight.

JUNE SONG

Ah, lovely June, thy sunny days are here,
  The world seems gayer for thy coming;
The glad birds sing their shrill and tender songs,
  And all day long the bees are humming.
All fairest things are of thyself a part:
Ah, lovely June, so sweet thou art!

And yet, so sad thou seemest, lovely June!
  Thy fragrant nights are cool and still,
And yet—regret and nameless pain,
  Some brooding sense of unknown ill,
Sighs in the air and clutches at the heart.
Ah, June! ah, lovely June, so sad thou art!

Ah, lovely June, thy ripening fields and woods,
  Thy butterflies and lazy bees,
Thy sunny mornings and thy starry nights,
  The secret south wind in thy trees,
Bring to me only vague regret—
Ah, lovely June, could I forget!

A MADRIGAL FOR PEGGY

Bits of the skies
Are Peggy's eyes,
Rose of the South
Her little mouth:
Surely the bird
Her voice hath heard,
Breaketh his heart because of its sweetness.

Truly I think,
Daintier pink
Breath of the Spring
Can never bring,
Than finds a place,
On her flower like face,
Breaketh my heart because of its sweetness.

The whole day long
A shrill sweet song
The bird doth sing;
Maketh to ring
The woods and the sky.
But I—not I—
Breaketh my heart because of her sweetness.

TO MY CAMPASPE

After Sir John Lilly

Of old, Dan Cupid and Campaspe played
  At cards for kisses, and Campaspe won.
In latter days a youth that game essayed—
The same which Cupid with Campaspe played—
  And like Dan Cupid was himself undone;
  Bow, arrows, heart—he lost them every one.

Campaspe won his dimple, heart and eyes,
  Refused his kisses, jeered him for his pains.
The modern maid was also coy, but wise.
She with her dimple took his heart and eyes!
  But keep what's won at play she would disdain,
  She took the stakes, but gave them back again.

TO MY HEART'S LOVE

(From the German)

About my Heart's-Love's lovely eyes,
I'll write a Canzonet;
About my Heart's-Love's rosy mouth
A dainty Triolet.

About my Heart's Love's little cheek
A Sonnet I'll impart;
But, oh, the poems I would write,
Had my Heart's-Love a heart.

DEFECTION

Oh, pretty bread and butter miss,
  Whom I'd have slain my soul to please,
I fondly thought our life would be
One long, long dream of bread and cheese.

But, ah, a woman came my way!
  She smiled on me—I could not fail
To think that life with her would be
  A pleasant thing of cakes and ale.

She spoke—her voice was molten gold,
  And I'd have died to make it mine,
For well I knew that life with her
  Would be the walnuts and the wine.

So, go your way in peace, my dear;
  May cream and peaches be your lot.
You never knew, so you'll forgive,
  And as for me—I have forgot.

NARCISSUS

The happy poet Pagans sung and said—
  Once lived a boy whose gracious beauty made
  This dark world radiant for a little space;
And all who looked upon his perfect face,
They needs must love him for its loveliness.

Thus many a nymph, whose passionate warm heart,
  Knowing not how to curb its tenderness—
  Broke with the weight of unrequited love,
Sighed out a prayer for pity to great Jove,
That his cold youth be pierced by Eros' dart.

Vain hope—for as it chanced upon a time,
Deep in a forest pool as crystal clear,
Himself he saw, and held no other dear
Thereafter. Stern Justice wavering,
  Meted a tender judgment for his crime.
  —Earth could ill spare so beautiful a thing—
A delicate, pure flower, he for all time
Will star the woodland in the early Spring.

A-MAYING

Oh, what is so rare as a day in May,
  When the great sun shines like this!
When the soft winds woo, all tender and true,
  And breathe on one's cheek like a kiss!
When the sky is so blue—ah—heaven's own blue!
  And the birds in the greening trees
Are bursting their throats with rapturous notes,
  As I lie on the ground and—
    Cchew—
    Ker—Ker————!
    Chou————!

THE EPICUREAN

Death loveth not the woful heart,
Or the soul that's tired of living.
Nay, it's up and away
With the heart that's gay
And the life that's worth the giving.

Seldom he stops where his welcome's sure,
Where age and want are sighing.
Nay, it's up and away,
For he scorns to stay
With the wretch who would be dying.

Ah, it's youth and love and a cloudless sky
The Epicurean's after.
Nay, it's up and away
When the world's in May
And life is full of laughter.

THE RAINDROP PRELUDE

(Chopin)

Oh song from out the master mind
  That sung to ease its pain
Of some insatiate, unknown wound,
  Stung by the falling rain.

The wild sweet notes of happiness,
  That pay a bitter toll,
In deep rebellion's crashing chords,
  Straight from an aching soul.

Then, struggling fiercely to be free,
  Soar on one lofty strain,
Beneath, the dull insistant note
  That hammers on the brain.

APRIL'S FAIR FALSE SMILE

Ah, wooed by April's fair, false smile
  And won by April's tear,
The fond and foolish trees and I
  Believe her every year.

But yesterday, so brave and gay,
  In garb of gallant hue,
We welcomed her with honest hearts
  And half believed her true.

By soft winds kissed, who could resist
  The promise of her sky—
To-day so pale and wan we are,
  Those trusting trees and I!

FROM HEINE

The rose, the lily, the sun, the dove,
These loved I once in bliss of love.
I love them no longer, I love alone
The pure, the fair, the only, the one.
For she herself, the queen of love
Is rose and lily and sun and dove.

THE LOTOS BLOOM

(*From the German*)

The Lotos Bloom is withered
  By the Sun's too-vivid light,
And waits with downward-drooping head
  The coming of the night.

The pale Moon is her lover;
  He wakes her with his beams,
Her pure face she unveileth,
  And riseth from her dreams.

She blooms and glows and lightens,
  And fragrant tear-drops flow;
She silently weeps and trembles
  With love and love's dear woe.

PEGGY'S HAIR

Of all sights the fairest,
And surely the rarest,
  Is the shine of her yellow hair;
In the lamplight gleaming,
Each gold curl seeming
  A thing beyond compare.

Oh, were it the fashion
For love to be passion,
  And knights still to joust for their fair,
There'd be tender fancies
And couching of lances,
  At the shine of her yellow hair.

Although 'tis no longer
Alway to the stronger
  To yield up the weak to despair,
There'll surely be plenty,
Before she is twenty,
  Will sigh for her yellow hair.

THY DARK EYES

(*From the German*)

Stay with me, oh eyes so tender,
  Dark and dreamy, mystic bright;
Wrap me round in all thy power,
  Like the sweet, mysterious night.

Take, with thy soft magic darkness,
  All the world away from me;
Let my life be thine forever,
  Thine through all eternity.

TRIOLET

Love is like an April day,
  Half of sunshine, half of shower;
Right the poets, they who say
Love is like an April day—
Silver lined, deny who may,
  Are the clouds that darkly lower—
Love is like an April day,
  Half of sunshine, half of shower.

LOVE'S SUICIDE

Sweet Love lies dead,
  So stark and cold;
His golden head
  Rests on the mould.
Blood red roses
  Flung at his feet,
Ah Love, fair Love,
  Thou wert so sweet!

So cold and stark
  Sweet Love lies slain;
Over his heart
  One crimson stain,
The fair dead past
  Can ne'er awake,
Love slew himself
  For his own dear sake.

AN ERRAND OF MERCY

A Monologue

"Ah! you are nothing the worse for wear
For the ball last night, I see.
Mam'selle is looking uncommonly fair:
Whither away? what's that—let me.
On an errand of mercy—your last night's flowers?
Dear little saint that you are!
Poor little chap—he's sick, you say?
Here comes the cross-town car.
Walk? I'm your man—no, indeed,
I've nothing 'better to do.'
What could I do that was better, please,
Than carry the flowers for you?
And the ball—and the Browns—'twas fine.
What a floor! It's positively true
One wouldn't guess if one didn't know,
That the house and the Browns are new.
Girls are stunning, father's fair,
Mother decidedly plain;
But they floated themselves right into the swim
On that tidal wave of champagne.
You are awfully fetching, do you know,
With that basket on your arm:
And you've matched your air to your errand, too;
Little angel—why, what's the harm?
Nobody heard—Mabel looked well,
That's an awfully swagger gown.
She always looks nice in white, I think.
Stopped there on my way down town:
She's rather used up: got a beastly cold:
Danced too much, I suppose,

And probably got in her work on Tom
  In the greenhouse, under the rose.
What's that? I don't understand:
  Got her cold in another way?
Yes, the house is new—just done,
  And the 'walls are damp,' you say?
Ah, your place? so sorry!
  You'll be at the Jones' tea?
Sure—good-by—in your orisons
  Sweet saint, remember me."

A SONG

What's love, you say?
Oh, 'tis a pretty thing, a charming toy;
A winter's pastime, and a summer's joy.
That's love, we'll say.

What's love, you say?
Ah! 'Tis a cruel thing, a bitter pain,
Blots out the sun, and breaks a heart in twain.
That's love, we'll say.

What's love, you say?
A thing to play with, and a thing of fears,
An hour-time's laughter, and a life-time's tears.
That's love, we'll say.

What's love, you say?
Ah, love is everything—and smile or sigh,
Stay with me love, forever, or I die.
That's love, we'll say.

RONDEAU

"The hour seems ours," he softly said—
"Come, pretty one, be not afraid;
  Ah! that I might with thee abide
  In some far desert isle, my bride,
Nor ever tire, thou gentle maid."

"The bustling world's vain pomp and pride
  Is too much with us, love," he said,
" 'Tis only when the day has died
  The hour seems ours."

Time's flying feet had scarcely sped
Three months. I passed those lovers, wed.
  I passed them, sitting side by side.
  "Oh for some desert isle!" she cried.
Again that lover softly said:
  "The hour seems hours!"

A SONG OF THE MOOR

The glowing moor is wide, is wide,
  And the blue sea stretches away,
The blue blue sky is over it all,
  And the day seems a perfect day.

But something comes 'twixt mine eyes and the sky,
  A something dark and dread,
Comes 'twixt me and the moor and the sea,
  And the perfect day seems dead.

The riotous song of life and love
  Jangles with one false note,
And the bitter sweet of a lost delight
  Lays a clutching hand on my throat.

But the strong west wind blows into my heart
  And sweeps sad thoughts away—
The moor is wide and the sea is blue
  And the day is a perfect day!

BLISS

At early morn when all the grass
  Is wet with sparkling dew;
When all the flowers are fresh and fair,
  And all the sky is blue:
When every little fickle wind
  Is whispering in the trees,
When every single little leaf
  Is quivering in the breeze,
When all the world is waking up
  To greet the coming day,
I love to think of all the world
  Upon its working way.
For early birds and honest toil
  My admiration's deep—
—I love to pull the covers up,
  And gently fall asleep.

MY LADY'S MINIATURE

Set in a pearl-encrusted frame,
The portrait of a stately dame
  Hangs on the wall above me.
The almond eyes, the Cupid's bow;
—The proper thing in lips you know—
  (Ah, did thy painter love thee?)

The simple gown of some quaint stuff
Slips off the shoulders just enough;
  The hair's demurely parted.
—But soft! Behind the dainty ear
Methinks I see—why, yes—it's clear—
  An embryo ringlet's started.

(Ah, sure thy painter was a man!)
The taper fingers hold a fan
  As tho' 'twere done for duty.
In fact, my Lady's languished air
Is handled very deftly there:
  —No doubt some famous beauty

Who lived quite fifty years ago.
The "atmosphere" would tell one so.
  —These old things are delicious.
Old miniatures, of course, I mean.
This lovely maid is now, I ween,
  A grandmamma—oh, fate capricious!

But stay—what's this—what's this—I see?
A date—a modern date—dear me.
  And—my—stupendous—folly!
This languid dame whose lovely face
Simpers with such an old-time grace
  Is after all My Polly!

LOVE BLOWS AS THE WIND BLOWS

"Love blows as the wind blows,
Love blows into the heart."

Arabian Proverb.

The fickle wind blows west and east,
(Love blows as the wind blows.)
The fickle moon is love's high priest,
(Love blows into the heart.)

Sweet love, sweet love is lightly won,
(Love blows as the wind blows.)
Sweet love, sweet love is quickly gone—
(Love blows into the heart.)

April's made of shine and shower,
(Love blows as the wind blows.)
The north wind frights each timid flower—
(Love blows into the heart.)

June roses with their hearts on fire,
(Love blows as the wind blows.)
Flame and fade in their own desíre—
(Love blows into the heart.)

Ah, perfect love—for thee a sigh—
(Love blows as the wind blows.)
Thou wert so sweet and fair to die,
(Love blows into the heart.)

Bind with the rue thy radiant brow—
(Love blows as the wind blows.)
Beloved of the Gods wert thou!
(Love blows into the heart.)

YOUR HAND IN MINE

This bubble world, all rainbow-hued,
  Without a care or sorrow,
Reflects the sea and sky to-day,
  —Perhaps 'twill burst tomorrow.

Well, come what may, 'tis mine to-day!
  Come joy—come pain—come trouble—
Your hand 's in mine—I'd catch my breath
  And blow another bubble!

And should an impish little wind,
  —A little wind illusive—
Attempt to trifle with my world,
  And make the thing conclusive:

Ah, sweetheart mine, your hand 's in mine—
  All other things forsaking—
So—rainbow hues are treasure trove,
  And bubbles need but making!

FOR YOU ARE NOT HERE

The nights are silver,
  And the days are gold:
The moor is wind-swept,
  And its charms unfold
And greet me hourly—
  —Hourly grow more dear—
One thing it lacketh,
  For you are not here.

Love is a bubble
  Blown in to the dawn,
That floats elusive—
  In a moment gone.
Life is the play thing of each passing year—
My hands are empty,
  For you are not here.

The sun is brazen,
  And the moon is cold;
The moor is silent—
  All its tale is told.
The wind is dreary,
  —Hourly grows more drear—
My world is empty,
  For you are not here.

MID-SUMMER

All through the long hot lazy summer day
The whole wide earth lies drowzing in the sun:
  The level fields of ripened yellow wheat
  Are motionless, drugged by the golden heat:
The listless bumble bees all aimless stray,
Content to buzz, and leave their tasks undone.

Under the chestnut trees the cool shades lie,
Making a dim spot fit for men and gods.
  Like Lotus-eaters, idling the hours away,
  All through the long hot lazy summer day,
Content to drift and let the world go by
We drift. The world goes by—and whats the odds!

THE WIZARD WIND

Oh racing wind, thou wizard of the west,
From half across the world ye come to me:
Ye bear upon your wings the wine of life—
The golden wine—and I'll drink deep of thee!

What boots it that perhaps a mighty storm
Is close behind—thrice welcome it, I say—
The clouds may pile themselves up to the sky—
Oh wind, wild wind, blow through my heart to-day!

The white topped waves beat on the yellow sands,
The sea gulls scream above a tumbling sea:
Oh racing wind, thou Merlin of the west,
Today I am in love with life and thee!

WHEN PHILLADA WAS FLOUTED

Ah love doth wax and love doth wane,
  And love hath many sorrows:
Tomorrow brings surcease of pain,
  And there be many morrows!

Alack-a-day—that I, who know
  A dozen maxims wise, dear,
'Cause Colin pleased me, should forego
  The wisdom that I prize, dear!

To flout the world for his dear sake,
—He takes it as his due, dear—
And if ye flout the world too long,
  The world it will flout you, dear.

Sweet ladies far and ladies near,
  Take heed from my undoing;
And never let your lover win,
  But keep him ever wooing.

However well the youth may sue,
  However well he please, dear,
Give him a smile for every sigh,
  And keep him on his knees, dear.

Ah, there be many a gallant gay,
  Who needs him but my smiling:
Colin shall know I have not lost
  The art of sweet beguiling!

For love doth wax, and love doth wane,
  And love hath many sorrows—
Tomorrow brings surcease of pain,
  And there be many morrows!

FROM HEINE

He is a god who first time loves,
  Tho' he may love in vain:
But by the gods he is a fool
Who hapless loves again.

And such a fool am I—once more
  Of hopeless love I sigh.
Sun, moon, and stars, they laugh at me:
  And I laugh too—and die!

HAVE A CARE, MY LADY

Have a care, my lady,
Or at some other shrine thy lover will be sighing.
Laugh and cry, smile and sigh:
Pout
And flout—
Use thy prettiest art
If thou'd keep his heart:
Or for a newer love thy lover will be dying.

Have a care, my lady!
His fancy's wing already is pluming for a flight—
Frown and flush, pale and blush:
Dance
And glance.
Use thy dainty skill to charm him:
See to it that thou disarm him,
Or some rival beauty will slay him in her might.

Have a care, my lady—!
Bind him but with roses, and let his chains not gall him!
Make haste, nor waste
Time
And prime:
Have a hundred faces
And a thousand graces,
And never be the same if thou forever wouldst enthrall him!

RONDEAU

As light as air the merry jest
Where all's in pantomime expressed—
  The crackling whip Ar'chino vaults to,
  Old Pantaloon all trembling halts to—
Gay Harlequin, with knavish zest,
His love for Columbine confessed.

The lively tune that maidens waltz to,
The pretty vows that lads are false to,
The mellow laugh, the idle jest,
        Are light as air.

While Motes dance on with half mad zest,
Low down, with passion half suppressed,
  Sings some poor wretch that life's been false to,
  The old refrain, that music halts to.
"Comme la vie est amere"—confessed,
"La Vie" 's a trifling thing at best—
        As light as air.

5.30 A. M.

Oh that proverbial early bird,
  —The one that caught the worm—
I would that I had never heard
Of that proverbial early bird.
A pious fraud, a snare absurd,
  I boldly do affirm,
Was that proverbial early bird,
  —The one that caught the worm.

Envoi

And Prince, the Worm.
    He also rose betimes.
And yet methinks his was a cruel fate.
Would it not seem the moral of the tale
Were this—'twere best to lie full late?

TRIOLET

Ah, truth to tell
  'Tis sweet to lie
Within some fair and shady dell.
Ah, truth to tell,
'Tis sweet to yield to love's sweet spell—
  I'll give him sigh for sigh.
For truth to tell,
  'Tis sweet to lie!

JAN 27 1912

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